

CTChiro
Connecticut Chiropractic Association
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Statement of Francis Vesce, D.C.
before the Human Services Committee
Senate Bill 397
March 13, 2012

Sen. Musto, Rep. Tercyak and members of the committee:

My name is Francis Vesce. I have been a practicing Chiropractic Physician for 20 years. I also serve as president of the Connecticut Chiropractic Association and represent that organization today in support of Senate Bill 397, *An Act Amending the Medicaid State Plan to Include chiropractic Treatment as an Optional Service*.

We believe low-income recipients in Medicaid should have access to chiropractic services.

Research from Medicare, managed care organizations, workers compensation and the state of Vermont all demonstrate the cost-saving benefit of chiropractic care. In 1999, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services compiled data on beneficiaries treated by a doctor of chiropractic and those who were not. The chiropractic-treated group represented 1.5 million lives or 26.8 percent. This population had lower average Medicare payments per capita for all Medicare services (\$4,426 versus \$8,103).

We are the primary portal of entry in the health care system for many issues pertaining to the nervous, skeletal and muscular systems. If we continue to be excluded from Medicaid, all it means is that patients will be sent to see an MD or orthopaedic specialist. Meanwhile, we could be seeing and treating them quicker at a lower cost.

Our profession provides nutritional and wellness guidance and have been the leading force in these areas, providing our patient with the tools to lead a healthier lifestyle. Don't you want that as part of the Medicaid program?

We're good enough for Medicare. We're included in worker's compensation. We provide services in HUSKY. We are the third largest medical specialty in the nation. Surveys show that patients give our practitioners a very high level of approval. They desire our services and treatments. Let's let low-income citizens have this option.

At the current HUSKY rate, a chiropractor is paid \$13 per visit. If that patient were to go primary care physician, orthopedist, neurologist or emergency room), the cost would be far greater. Additionally, many times the patient will have to wait for several weeks to be seen, which forces them to go to the emergency room. Meanwhile, we have chiropractors who can see these patients right now.

In coming years, Medicaid enrollments are expected to grow substantially due to federal healthcare reform. This could cause delays in their ability to see primary care practitioners. We could help address that demand.

In summary, the Connecticut Chiropractic Association supports this legislation. We would ask that you step in and restore Chiropractic services to the Medicaid program. Thank you for considering our position on this issue. I would be happy to answer any questions you might have.